

2009 Summer Reading

Grades 6-8

Compiled by the Newton Middle School Library Teachers

Just Like Real Life

The Compound by S.A. Bodeen

As the U.S. is being attacked with nuclear weapons, Eli flees with his family to an underground shelter his super-rich father had built for just such an occasion. Now nine years later, and Eli discovers an email from his twin brother who never made it to safety. Is the email some kind of sick joke, or was the nuclear attack a hoax?

Forever Princess by Meg Cabot

Mia, who is finally a senior at Albert Einstein High, faces difficult choices about boys and her status as princess while her future--and Genovia's--hangs in the balance.

No Cream Puffs by Karen Day

In 1980, when twelve-year-old Madison, who loves to play baseball, decides to play in her town's baseball league, she never envisions the uproar it causes when she becomes the first girl to join. (Newton author)

Runner by Carl Deuker

Chance lives with his troubled father on a boat in Seattle, and he's counting the days until he can graduate and get away. Out for one of his long-distance runs, he meets a stranger who offers to pay him--a lot--to make some deliveries during his runs. Chance takes the offer, eager to make money to start his new life. He has no idea what he's gotten himself into.

The Disreputable History of Frankie Landau Banks by E. Lockhart

Frankie Landau-Banks attempts to take over a secret, all-male society at her exclusive prep school, and her antics with the group soon draw some unlikely attention and have unexpected consequences that could change her life forever.

Boost by Kathy Mackel

Savvy is the girls basketball team's star player, but, despite her height and skills, Savvy struggles with her self-confidence and searches for some way to boost her performance. When steroids are found in her bag, Savvy denies they are hers and the rumors start to fly.

Freak by Marcella Pixley

Twelve-year-old Miriam, poetic, smart, and quirky, is considered a freak by the popular girls at her middle school. How will she handle this painful predicament? The author is a graduate of Brown Middle School in Newton.

Trouble by Gary Schmidt

Henry, wishing to honor his brother Franklin's dying wish, sets out to hike Maine's Mount Katahdin with his best friend and dog, but fate adds another companion--the Cambodian refugee accused of fatally injuring Franklin--and reveals troubles that predate the accident.

After Tupac & D Foster by Jacqueline Woodson

In the New York City borough of Queens in 1996, three girls bond over their shared love of Tupac Shakur's music, as together they try to make sense of the unpredictable world in which they live.

Other Worlds

The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins

Sixteen-year-old Katniss Everdeen accidentally becomes a contender in the annual Hunger Games, a grave competition hosted by the Capitol where young boys and girls are pitted against one another in a televised fight to the death.

Twice Upon a Marigold by Jean Ferris

After a quiet, happy year in a small town, Queen Olympia regains her memory and initiates new plots and manipulations, as the residents of Zandephia and Beaurivage, now ruled by Christian, Marigold, and Swithbert, feel the effects of her bad energy. (Sequel to *Once upon a Marigold*)

The Graveyard Book by Neil Gaiman

Bod, short for Nobody, escaped the man who murdered his whole family by running into an old graveyard. The inhabitants voted to take him in and they raise him with love and care, but his past does not go away, nor the man who pursued him so many years before. (2009 Newbery Winner)

Found by Margaret Peterson Haddix

When thirteen-year-olds Jonah and Chip, who are both adopted, learn they were discovered on a plane that appeared out of nowhere, full of babies with no adults on board, they realize that they have uncovered a mystery involving time travel and two opposing forces, each trying to repair the fabric of time.

How to Ditch Your Fairy by Justine Larbalestier

In a world in which everyone has a personal fairy who tends to one aspect of daily life, fourteen-year-old Charlie decides she does not want hers--a parking fairy--and embarks on a series of misadventures designed to rid herself of the invisible sprite and replace it with a better one, like her friend Rochelle's shopping fairy.

Ever by Gail Carson Levine

Fourteen-year-old Kezi and Olus, Akkan god of the winds, fall in love and together try to change her fate--to be sacrificed to a Hyte god because of a rash promise her father made--through a series of quests that might make her immortal.

Princess Ben by Catherine Murdock

Princess Benevolence discovers an enchanted room while locked in the castle's highest tower by the conniving Queen Sophia and begins learning the magical arts, which may help her save her kingdom from a mortal threat.

The Adoration of Jenna Fox by Mary Pearson

In the not-too-distant future, Jenna wakes up from a year-long coma following a car accident that killed her two best friends. As she recovers, she can't remember anything of her earlier life and has to watch home movies to learn who she was. Nothing is quite making sense: why can't she go to school, why does her grandmother hate her, and why doesn't her body feel quite right?

Heroes of the Valley by Jonathan Stroud

Halli Sveinsson, a mischievous young man who does not fit in with his peers and siblings, plays a trick on Ragnor that goes too far, forcing him to embark on a hero's quest in which he will face highway robbers, monsters, an intriguing girl, and truths about his family and the legends he grew up with.

Back in Time

Before We Were Free by Julia Alvarez

Anita, a typically self-absorbed twelve-year-old living in the Dominican Republic in the early 1960s, is surprised to discover her family is involved in the underground movement to end the bloody rule of the dictator, General Trujillo.

Chains: Seeds of America by Laurie Halse Anderson

After being sold to a cruel couple in New York City, a slave named Isabel spies for the rebels during the Revolutionary War.

The Boy Who Dared by Susan Campbell Bartoletti

In October, 1942, Helmuth Hübener, imprisoned for distributing anti-Nazi leaflets, recalls his past life and how he came to dedicate himself to bring the truth about Hitler and the war to the German people.

The Dragonfly Pool by Eva Ibbotson

Tally and her friends at Dalderton Boarding School form a dance troupe and travel to Bergania, where she befriends Karil, the crown prince, and helps him flee the Nazis after his father is assassinated.

Black Duck by Janet Taylor Lisle

Years afterwards, Ruben Hart tells the story of how, in 1929 Newport, Rhode Island, his family and his best friend's family were caught up in the violent competition among groups trying to control the local rum-smuggling trade.

Sisters of the Sword by Maya Snow

Two aristocratic sisters in ancient Japan disguise themselves as samurai warriors to take revenge on the uncle who betrayed their family.

Mystery & Adventure

Shift by Jennifer Bradbury

When best friends Chris and Win go on a cross country bicycle trek the summer after graduating and only one returns, the FBI wants to know what happened.

Things Not Seen by Andrew Clements

Bobby wakes up one morning to get ready for school, but when he goes into the bathroom he notices a problem--he's not there. Somehow, Bobby has turned invisible overnight. His parents tell him to stay home until they can figure out how to make him visible again, but he just can't wait.

Airman by Eoin Colfer

In the 1890s on an island off the Irish coast, Conor Broekhart is falsely imprisoned and passes the solitary months by scratching designs of flying machines into the walls, including one for a glider with which he dreams of escape.

The Witches of Dredmoore Hollow by Riford McKenzie

Elijah, a nearly twelve-year-old boy growing up on a farm in rural New England in 1927, makes the shocking discovery that his mother is a witch when two strangely glamorous aunts arrive, who are suspiciously interested in his first chin whisker, to spirit him away to Moaning Marsh. 2009 Edgar Allen Poe Award nominee.

The Curse of the Peculiar Pink Fan by Nancy Springer

Fourteen-year-old Enola Holmes digs into her trunk of disguises to track down a missing heiress--and avoid her older brother Sherlock Holmes, who wants her to return to the family home and live the life of a respectable young lady. Another in the historical mystery series that begins with *The Case of the Missing Marquess*.

Stolen by Vivian Vande Velde

Isabelle, twelve years old, has no memory of her past. Could she have been stolen by the old witch of the woods, or is her memory loss from an accident?

More Than Superheroes

The P.L.A.I.N. Jones by Cecil Castelucci and Jim Rugg

After moving from Metro City to the boring suburbs, Jane and her new friends (Jane, Jayne, and Polly Jane) form a secret society to startle their suburban neighbors with funky public art installations that pop up overnight.

Rapunzel's Revenge by Shannon Hale

Rapunzel, having grown up in a lovely castle with the woman she thought was her mother, is placed in a very tall hollow tree as punishment after her curiosity prompts her to climb the castle wall and look at the ruin of the world beyond her home, but she is able to escape and with the help of Jack, embarks on a plan to free the land from the grip of the witch.

Houdini: The Handcuff King by Jason Lutes and Nick Bertozzi

The legendary escape artist plans to jump off the Harvard Bridge in Cambridge as a publicity stunt. Wearing only a swimsuit, he's examined by police and imprisoned in handcuffs and leg irons before jumping into the icy Charles River. Find out how he escapes.

Satchel Paige: Striking out Jim Crow by James Sturm and Rich Tomasso

Satchel Paige put on a show when he pitched and commanded respect as an African American able to strike out white players almost at will, but the times were very difficult for African Americans because of Jim Crow practices.

Into the Volcano: a Graphic Novel by Don Wood

While their parents are away doing research, brothers Duffy and Sumo Pugg go with their cousin, Mister Come-and-Go, to Kokalaha Island, where they meet Aunt Lulu and become trapped in an erupting volcano.

The Real World

The Wicked History of the World by Terry Deary & Martin Brown

A collection of interesting facts that describes fifty of the most vicious villains in history.

Marley and Me by John Grogan

The author presents a tender story of his family's love for their golden retriever, Marley, and recalls how he grew from a mischievous puppy into a nearly impossible adult that no amount of obedience school training could correct.

We Are the Ship: The Story of Negro League Baseball by Nelson Kadir

Explores the history of Negro League baseball teams, discussing owners, players, hardships, wins, and losses; and including illustrations.

Knucklehead by Jon Scieszka

The author of the Time Warp Trio books explains how growing up as one of six brothers, having a Catholic education, reading comic books, spending summers at the lake with time to kill, watching TV shows, and hearing jokes at the family dinner all played a part in making him the writer he became.

Eat This, Not That!: for Kids! by David Zinczenko

Is the food from your favorite fast food restaurant healthy? Learn the nutritional facts for thousands of foods along with healthier alternatives. The adult version is on the best-seller list.

Great Books Too Good to Miss

Ender's Game by Orson Scott Card

Ender, who is the result of genetic experimentation, may be the military genius Earth needs in its war against an alien enemy.

The Princess Bride by William Goldman

Westley, a farm boy, goes off to seek his fortune shortly after declaring his love for Buttercup, the most beautiful woman in the world, but their relationship is put to the test when his ship is captured by pirates and she is summoned to become the bride of the prince.

The Outsiders by S.E. Hinton

Three brothers struggle to stay together after their parent's death as they search for identity among the conflicting values of their adolescent society.

Stargirl by Jerry Spinelli

The new girl at a high school is a unique individual who has a real impact on life at the school and those who care for her, and the school has an unexpected impact on her.

The Uglies by Scott Westerfeld

Tally, like everyone in this society, is scheduled to have an operation at her sixteenth birthday to turn her into a perfectly beautiful pretty and then move into a high-rise high-tech home where life is a party all day long. Will she go through with the operation?

Moving Up to 6th Grade

Masterpiece by Elise Broach

Marvin, a beetle with amazing artistic talent, and his human friend James become embroiled in a plot to recover a drawing stolen from the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

Groosham Grange by Anthony Horowitz

After being expelled from school, thirteen-year-old David Eliot is sent to Groosham Grange, a spooky and sinister boarding school where nothing seems quite right.

The Quest Begins by Erin Hunter

Three young bears of different species--one black, one polar, and one grizzly--travel on a perilous quest to the Northern Lights, escorting a shape-shifting grizzly cub whose destiny will affect them all.

Diary of a Wimpy Kid: the Last Straw by Jeff Kinney

Middle-schooler Greg Heffley nimbly sidesteps his father's attempts to change Greg's wimpy ways until his father threatens to send him to military school. Book 3 in the popular series.

Savvy by Ingrid Law

Mibs Beaumont is about to turn 13 and learn what her "savvy" or magical power is, just as her father is injured in a terrible accident.

The Secret Language of Girls by Frances O'Roark Dowell

Marylin and Kate have been friends since nursery school, but when Marylin becomes a middle school cheerleader and Kate begins to develop other interests, their relationship is put to the test.